

Palestine refugee family in their shelter in Bar Elias, Beqaa



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# protection at unrwa in 2016

## the year in review

### Protection Environment in Lebanon

#### Key protection issues for Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL)

- Right to adequate housing and property
- Right to work and access to employment
- Lack of legal documentation and/or lack of registration with Lebanese authorities for non-ID Palestinians

More than 60 per cent of PRL are living in 12 overcrowded refugee camps with substandard housing conditions, limited work opportunities and restricted freedom of movement.

#### Key protection issues for Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS)

- Access to territory
- Legal stay in Lebanon
- Civil registration
- Freedom of movement and detention
- Onward movement to third countries
- Access to services and vulnerability to abuse

Of the more than 32,000 Palestine refugees from Syria living in more than 9,000 households:

- 44 per cent are children and 52 per cent are women
- 34 per cent of households are headed by women
- 93 per cent of households rely on UNRWA assistance as their main source of livelihood

### The Situation of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon

- More than five million Palestine refugees, the largest refugee population in the world, are registered by UNRWA in five areas of operation in the Middle East, including over 513,000 registered in Lebanon.
- According to an estimate from the 'Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon, 2015' by the American University of Beirut, between 260,000 and 280,000 Palestine refugees from Lebanon currently reside in the country.
- Many Palestine refugees have historically been excluded from key aspects of social, political and economic life with the result that they face restrictions on the enjoyment of their human rights.
- They also have severely restricted access to public services and job opportunities, which leads to marginalization and increased vulnerability.
- Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS) escaping the conflict and seeking safety in Lebanon have faced limitations on their legal access to Lebanese territory since August 2013, while those PRS already in the country (32,000 recorded as of December 2016) face specific protection threats due to their precarious legal status, in particular, limited access to essential civil registration procedures.

### UNRWA Protection Response in Lebanon

The Agency's response to an increasingly challenging protection environment in Lebanon focuses on safeguarding and realizing the rights of Palestine refugees, with a particular focus on the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

The approach adopted is multidimensional and includes:

- Identification of vulnerable individuals faced with protection concerns, including violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation and referral to seek solutions that meet their protection needs.
- Engagement in high level advocacy with national authorities, duty bearers, donors and the international community to promote Palestine refugees' rights under international law.
- Documenting, monitoring and reporting protection risks and trends that provide evidence for advocacy and help shape programming.

# protection at unrwa

## Key Results in Lebanon, 2016

- Some **700 individuals** facing a protection risk identified and referred to services and support (49 per cent PRS, 53 per cent children and 54 per cent female).
- Almost **8,000 individuals** accessed legal services, including awareness raising, counselling, assistance and representation.
- Close to **1,000 frontline staff** trained on protection topics, including: safe identification and referral; protection mainstreaming; gender-based violence; child protection and parenting skills.
- Over **1,200 Palestine refugees** women, girls, men and boys (25 per cent PRS) reached through GBV sensitization and group psychosocial support activities.
- Over **30 unaccompanied and separated PRS children** provided with emergency assistance following household assessments.
- Over **160 people** interviewed in relation to cross-border movements in and out of Syria.

- Coordination with external partners, with the aim of ensuring that Palestinian issues are reflected in the wider humanitarian programming and planning.
- Monitoring cross-border movements of PRS through interviews and surveys to contribute to advocacy.
- Provision of legal aid services such as counselling and formal representation services (civil matters) to Palestine refugees, in addition to awareness-raising on the rights of Palestine refugees.
- Mainstreaming protection standards and principles across UNRWA programmes through capacity building of staff.
- Provision of gender-based violence (GBV) case management and psychosocial support to survivors of GBV.
- Capacity building of frontline workers in safe identification and referral as well as prevention and response to GBV and child protection (CP) incidents.
- Facilitation of community protection groups across Lebanon to strengthen community-based prevention of GBV and protection activities.

Young Palestine refugee working in Saida



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## Facing discrimination from his employer, UNRWA legal assistance helped Ziad obtain compensation

Ziad is a Palestine refugee from Beddawi refugee camp who works in the Health, Safety and Environmental sector. Given the difficulties of finding employment opportunities in Lebanon, Ziad had worked in Oman to support his family in Lebanon. In 2015, Ziad was recruited for a new job in Lebanon where he would be a safety manager in a water supply company in Beirut. Ziad signed the contract with the Lebanese company and resigned from his job in Oman. On Ziad's first day of work, he was surprised to find that another employee had been hired for his position. A few days later, the company informed him that his contract was terminated, leaving him unemployed and without resources. Following legal counselling provided by the UNRWA Legal Aid Unit in Lebanon, Ziad decided to raise a claim against the company to the Lebanese Labour Court. After several hearings, the court issued a preliminary decision that Ziad was entitled to indemnities. This decision prompted the company to negotiate directly with Ziad and in November 2016, both parties reached a settlement where the company agreed to pay Ziad six months indemnities, concluding the judicial process.



united nations relief and works agency  
for palestine refugees in the near east

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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.